

To the
SUPREME AUTHORITY
Of this Nation,
Asssembled in PARLIAMENT.

The Humble Petition of the CREDITORS in the
Common-wealth of ENGLAND.

Shewing,

1657

THat your petitioners have entrusted their Estates, or the greatest part thereof, into the hands of most of the Gentry and Yeomandry of this Nation. That instead of repayment, they are by unjust practises deprived of their real Debts: in that the debtors make prisons their Sanctuaries; rather submitting their persons to such places, then to pay what they borrowed.

That the Debtors oftentimes having purchased to themselves and to their Heirs estates with those moneys which were borrowed from your petitioners, the Fraud hereby practised is insufferable: Sithence that those very monies which in a very short time would pay the Creditors of this Nation either their principal, interest, or both, are spent in Ryoting in the precincts of prisons, or else in standing fees, bribes, and gratuities to prison-keepers to permit freedom; which is nor can be any other then an impoverishment to the Nation in general, and raising of revenues to the prison-keepers in particular: The revenues of some one of them being far better and greater then tenne thousands pounds per ann. That your petitioners are sensible that you have promised to make this nation free, and that no mans person should be enslaved (unless in cases criminal) That you have declared this Nation to be a free Nation, for the purchasing of which, much Blood hath bin spilt, many thousands lost their lives; many of the free-born people of England maymed, others consumed in their estates, as also vast sums of money raised to purchase this personal freedom, and as yet it is not confirmed unto them.

Your petitioners humbly conceiving, that by the restraint of mens persons for debt; there is not any persons are gainers but Prison-Keepers and their Adherents; who indeed are become Land-lords of the Creditor (and your petitioners) estates as well as of the Debtors estates, for that which the debtors should and ought to pay the creditor, must pay the prison-keepers (and their officers) for freedom, whereby they are fraudulently entituled to the estate of debtor and creditor.

In consideration of which, they do humbly desire, that the Bill or Act for the relief of the creditor; so often read, debated, committed, reported and resolved on by this great Council, may forthwith be passed, and that no particuler interests, aims, or By-respects may hinder its confirmation; That it may not be defer'd or delay'd any longer: so that the creditor may be satisfied out of the debtors estate; (for and in regard the Creditors of this nation upon the loan of their monyes did not lend to any person with an intent to enslave the borrowers person, but to have it repaid out of his estate,) That all mens persons for debt may be free, and their estates liable (in some part) and that for the future freedom and happiness of this Nation the writ of Capias may be abolished. In the concession of which by your great and grave wisdoms, the people in general will be the better enabled to supply the necessities of the Common-wealth and also be ready to assist you in their persons and estates.

All which being granted by this great and honorable Council, will much rejoyce and comfort the Nation in general, preserve it in unity and affection, fix the hearts of the people to you; prevent your petitioners from being ruined; it will cause the Nation to take notice that you have performed your own promises: it will also satisfy the expectancies and desires of the people, it will cause other Nations to affect the government: God will be glorified, your consciences discharged, and lastly you will do justice to the Nation in general; and the nations obedience will issue to you in particular.

And your Petitioners shall
As in duty bound ever pray &c.

To the
SUPREME COURT
Office of the
Attorney General
The Honorable
Commissioner of the
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Mr. 10/6

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